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ABSTRACT

The Friends of the San Francisco Public Library have sponsored a Reading is Fun-Damental (RIF) program for the children and teenagers of San Francisco. Their January and June 1973 reports describe RIF activities in the Western Addition, a primarily black area. The RIF program has: distributed books and placed collections in schools and public agencies; held book fairs; taken children to book warehouses to select their own books; and assisted schools and agencies in writing proposals for RIF programs. In addition to improving reading skills and interest, the RIF program's aims are to encourage more involvement of the community in the project and to enhance relationships between the community and the libraries. (LS)

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June 1, 1973

FINAL REPORT ON READING IS FUN-DAMENTAL PROGRAM PHASE II
CARETH B. REID, DIRECTOR

This summary builds on the last two reports on Reading Is Fundamental. The first, "Report to Board of Directors, Friends of the S. F. Public Library," prepared by Bernice Biggs, recommended that:

1. The pilot program continue another year.
2. Friends of the SFPL continue as the sponsoring agency.
3. The office of RIF be moved into the Western Addition.
4. The Friends renew their financial support.
5. The Director's salary be continued and that the Director be supported by a clerical assistant.

In addition, the report cited many supportive letters from agencies and schools and from children who had received RIF books.

The second report, entitled "Reading Is Fun-damental, Phase II," described implementation of the various recommendations in Mrs. Biggs' report:

1. The office of RIF was moved into the African-American Historical and Cultural Society, Inc., located in the Western Addition of San Francisco.
2. A new staff was hired, consisting of a Director and an Assistant.
3. A "kickoff" innovative Book Fair for Phase II was planned and executed.
4. It was noted that community involvement was not yet a reality in the program.
5. The following recommendations were made:

   a. Develop reading rooms and spaces with book stocks in schools and agencies.
   b. Plan and conduct book distributions by taking young people to book warehouses to make their own selections.
   c. Discontinue use of book van for distribution.
   d. Support independence on the part of agency and school staffs in developing programs for use of RIF books.
   e. Expand program by seeding various children's health-care agencies in the Western Addition.
   f. Support and assist in proposal-writing by individual schools and agencies as a means of better utilizing their staffs for RIF programs, and with the idea of terminating the RIF Director's and assistant's paid positions.
   g. Obtain authorization for distributor's book discounts to go direct to staffs of schools and agencies.

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This final report deals primarily with evaluation of the innovations in book selection and distribution and in program design and development.

It was felt that school distribution supervised and directed by teachers was not a valid basis for estimating actual student interest in the selection and retention of a book.

Accordingly, three Saturday distributions were arranged in local Recreation and Park Department centers that had no on-going RIF program. The schools which had previously participated were notified of two of the occasions only. The third distribution was publicized by 200 flyers in the community from 9 to 12 on the day of the distribution. No other publicity was undertaken. It was our intent to assess community interest in participation without the aid of school pressure.

1. The first distribution was planned to give one free book to each child who attended. Non-reading fun activities were provided; for example, puppets, movies, food, music, etc.
2. The second distribution was planned to give one free book to each child who attended, with no entertainment provided.
3. The third distribution was planned to give one free book and to sell additional books at 10¢ each, with no entertainment provided.

It was apparent from these experiments that fun activities tend to distract from serious involvement in book selection, and to shorten the time in making selections. Children remained in the distribution area longer when no non-reading activities were provided, which may mean that they were discovering that reading really is fun.

Boys attending the Saturday distributions outnumbered girls two to one, perhaps because girls are kept at home on Saturdays to perform household chores. Average age of the boys attending was 14; of the girls, 12.

The number of books stolen when they were being provided free but limited to one per child was high. The third distribution, with the first book free and additional books 10¢ each, was planned in the hope of curbing the high incidence of stealing. The experiment was completely successful; stealing was entirely eliminated. Also, charging a small fee for books seems to confer additional value on the item in the mind of the purchaser. This experience should be considered in future in promoting pride of ownership. Children who purchased books also showed more interest than others in acquiring bookplates when these were offered.

The assumption that adults are capable of fully anticipating reading needs and interests of young people was tested by arranging for uninhibited, open selection by the children at a book warehouse. It was found that the children showed greater interest in the warehouse distribution, and took twice as much time (and care) in choosing books as in pre-selected distributions.

Follow-up evaluation of actual reading of material selected was made at the Guided Group Interaction School and at the Fillmore and Fell Corporation Group Home. The results indicate that books personally selected by the readers in the warehouses inspired more concentrated interest and more discussion among peers than was otherwise the case. Conclusion:

Adolescent and young adult readers are more highly stimulated by absolute freedom in book selection. Personal involvement in the whole selection process seems to increase motivation to actually read the selected material. On the other hand, children aged nine and under are apparently overwhelmed by the vast collection. They are also difficult to manage in classroom-size groups.

One of the problems of the program has been to relate RIF to future library use. Programs come and go as funds are available, but professionally-staffed social institutions are stable and reliable, with predictable hours for use. The Public Library is such an institution and needs to be more successfully used by the residents of the Western Addition. In this connection, the presence of Effie Lee Morris, Coordinator of Children's Services at San Francisco Public Library, at the final book fair and distribution was fruitful. Also, the impact on Black children of finding a Black woman in a high position in the Library should not be overlooked.

Another direct connection between RIF distributions and the Western Addition Branch Library is exemplified by the film made at the Library by the Black Students Union of Washington High School. In writing the script and making the film these students began to develop a good relationship with the librarian, and vice versa. Effort should be made to further this kind of relationship between community and librarians. Another example of developing community involvement is the interest shown by the children in the use to be made of the money collected for the 10-cent books. When told it would be used to buy furniture for the children's section of the Western Addition Library, there was enthusiastic approval and extra donations of money. Portions of RIF programs, we suggest, should be made more supportive of library use and should reflect an improved partnership between library staffs and community-based reading programs.

Miss Morris has agreed to distribute early-childhood crossword puzzle books within the Library. These books will be made available through the small remaining budget of the RIF program. She has also requested paperbacks on juvenile rights under the law and on drugs to place on the library checkout counters for free distribution to young readers. This will result in a necessary community service. Suggestions for other services should be sought.

It was no accident that the first RIF director, Jule Johnson, and myself, two Black women, were chosen as directors of this community service project. The immediate gain from such identifiably sympathetic administrators was a measurable leap in community curiosity and consequent participation. The benefits of appointments such as ours should not be lost on the administrators of our Public Library system. Familiar faces on the staffs of community library branches are open invitations and enticements to the curious to shed any reticence, fear, or embarrassment and to enter the world of the library to be welcomed into a very new and very FUN experience.

In conclusion, it is felt that RIF is now soundly established in San Francisco, and that henceforth it can function without a paid director and assistant, providing proposal-writing is undertaken by schools and agencies as a means of better utilizing their staffs for RIF programs.

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BUDGET FOR READING IS FUN-DAMENTAL 1972-73 PROGRAM

OCTOBER 1, 1972 - MARCH 31, 1973

RECEIPTS	Budget
Friends of the San Francisco Public Library	8,850.00
San Francisco Foundation	8,850.00
Hearst Foundation	2,500.00
	$20,200.00

DISBURSEMENTS

Administrative:	Budget	Actual		
Delivery	$	$ 2.63		
Phone	200.00	122.27		
Office and Storage	500.00	500.00		
Printing and Mailing	500.00	193.27		
Book Plates	150.00	102.74		
Special Events	300.00	0		
			1,650	$ 920.91
Book Fairs			700	445.01
Salaries (Director and Assistant [including payroll tax]			4,350	4,366.14
Travel			1,500	150.00
Books - 20,500 books for 5,000 children			12,000	14,346.88
			$20,200	$20,228.94

SUMMARY:

20,200.00	Receipts
20,228.94	Disbursements
($28.94)	

May 24, 1973

AGENCIES PARTICIPATING DURING SECOND RIF PROGRAM
(October 1972 - March 1973)

	# BOOKS	
SCHOOLS:		
DUDLEY STONE	1623	
RAPHAEL WEILL	2009	
EMERSON	301	
WATOTO WEUSI	211	
CATHEDRAL INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL	164	
ST. DOMINIC'S	532	
SACRED HEART	193	
McATEER HIGH SCHOOL	1200	
JOHN SWETT SCHOOL	397	
JOHN MUIR	616	
COMMODORE SLOAT	51	
SYMBAS	167	
GOLDEN GATE SCHOOL	200	7663
COMMUNITY CENTERS:		
BOOKER T. WASHINGTON	946	
NORTHRIDGE CHILDREN'S CENTER	22	
AFRICAN AMERICAN SOCIETY	3848	
SUTTER STREET YWCA	289	
BUCHANAN YMCA GUIDANCE CENTER	282	
PALTENGHI	343	
SAN FRANCISCO BOYS'CLUB	100	
PARKER FAMILY	17	
ANITA PATTON - Volunteer helping children at MLK Square	160	
MARCUS GARVEY & MLK RESIDENCE CENTER	120	6127
AGENCIES:		
THE MOSQUE #26	132	
MT. ZION PEDIATRICS CLINIC	186	
CRITTENDEN HOME	249	
MUHAMMED'S TEMPLE #26	187	
THIRD BAPTIST CHURCH	54	
COMMUNITY TUTORIAL COUNSELING CENTER	228	
TOOTH TRIP	56	
FILLMORE-FELL GROUP HOME	402	
BLACKMAN'S FREE CLINIC	77	
THE GROUP	160	
YOUTH AUTHORITY	58	
YOUTH CONSERVATION	50	
YOUTH DEFENSE LEAGUE	360	2210
FAIRS: SF African-American Historical & Cultural Society	2400	
Hamilton Recreation Center - two fairs	(1100	
	(1000	4500
5000 CHILDREN		
TOTAL		20,500

5/24/73

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READING IS FUN-DAMENTAL
PHASE II

The RIF second phase began in the Western Addition District of San Francisco with a Book Fair at the San Francisco African American Historical and Cultural Society, Inc., on November 3-4, 1972. During the first phase of the program, RIF shared the offices of the Friends of the Library in the San Francisco Main Library, Civic Center. In an effort to become more accessible to the community it served, RIF moved the three blocks from the great gray stone edifice of the Main Library to the San Francisco African American Historical and Cultural Society, Inc., which is housed in a dilapidated, leaky old store front provided by the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency. In addition to its new location, RIF also started Phase II with a new director, Mrs. Careth B. Reid and her assistant Mrs. Joan Cooper.

An innovative Book Fair kicked off Phase II of RIF. The second Book Fair was designed to accomplish three goals: to distribute books to children on the Fair's opening day; to provide the children with continuous entertainment which emphasized the total experience as fun; and to gather leaders in the fields of reading education, reading psychology, and research to help us and the community people facilitate our RIF program to the greatest possible extent. Our Book Fair guestbook showed that 873 children attended the Fair and selected a book which they could keep. Fifteen students from the Black Students Union of Washington High School worked from 6 p.m. to 2 a.m. on the night before the Fair to unpack all the books and display them in the distribution racks provided by Mr. Henderson, manager of Golden Gate Magazine Company. In addition to the distribution of books to children, reading specialists participated with parents and other interested community people in special workshops at the Fair. (See Appendix A for a copy of our Book Fair Program and other public relations material for the Fair.) The success of the first phase of the program and good public relations was a big asset in obtaining much needed help to organize and present the Book Fair within one month. Sources of such help were many varied citywide groups and agencies. The San Francisco Art Commission's Neighborhood Arts Program printed programs. The San Francisco Recreation Department Arts and Crafts Department prepared one hundred posters to publicize the Fair. Youth from the Western Addition Youth Defense League helped distribute the posters throughout the community. Girls from the Fillmore and Fell Corporation Group Home helped decorate the Society for the Fair, assisted small children in their selection of books, and operated the movie room at the Fair which showed continuous children's films. The Friends of the Library helped with public relations, decorations,

and direct mailings. All of the participants in the Fair workshops donated their services. Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation also contributed to the Fair's success by arranging a preview of the nationally acclaimed film, "Sounder." Many noted out-of-state libraries who could not attend did send tapes which they prepared for presentation in the workshops.

Although generally rated highly successful, the second phase Book Fair was assessed as needing much more indepth community public relations and involvement of the community at a real grassroots level. Most of the community involvement was with the paid staffs of community agencies. Our failure to adequately inform the parents in the community was reflected in workshops filled with specialists and students training to become specialists.

In developing a local philosophy for the RIF program, the staff conducted interviews regarding the success of the book distribution method in the first phase of the program. These interviews revealed that certain modifications should be effected. Among these were:

(1) Development of reading rooms in the schools, agencies, and community centers, to be kept well stocked with books so that the children do in fact have a wide choice.

(2) "Reading Is Fun-Damental" rooms also allowed children to come and choose a book at their convenience, rather than during a limited time period or on one special designated day. Browsing time is also extended by these rooms.

(3) Distribution might also be improved for teenagers through allowing them direct access to warehouse to make their book selections. An example of method applied is described in a letter from the State of California Human Relations Agency, Department of Youth Authority. (See Appendix B.)

(4) Whereas in a citywide program of book distribution, a book van would prove of great value, its use is not really required in an area as small as the Western Addition of San Francisco.

(5) "Reading Is Fun-Damental" reading rooms in central locations rather than in every center also tend to increase staff responsibility for program development. Present experience with community agencies reflects a heavy dependency on RIF director and her assistant for program development in individual agencies and centers.

To help promote some of the above modifications, a reading room was established at the Society as a model for other agencies who wanted to develop such a room,and a contest for the best utilization of a space and the programming conducive to reading for fun was announced by the RIF director. (See Appendix C: Entry Blank; "Reading Is Fun-Damental" Reading Space Contest.) Contest winners

will be announced at our RIF Book Fair and Swap Meet on January 20, 1973, at Hamilton Recreation Center on Geary Street in San Francisco.

By making the requirements for Reading Is Fun-Damental Rooms flexible, we have encouraged more staff and community committment. Some schools have developed "Reading Is Fun-Damental" spaces at the rear of classrooms and children are allowed to visit the space as a reward for good work and to be tutored quietly in reading. Other schools have developed a private Reading Is Fun-Damental Reading Room where children from all classes can go to read for fun. Some of the rooms have record players and children read to music. All of the rooms and spaces that have already been judged reflect a true creativity in decor as students, teachers, and community aides all work informally together to make a really comfortable space. Community centers who have developed "Reading Is Fun-Damental" spaces have usually integrated this space into established reading or library rooms which previously contained primarily donated hardcover used books. The addition of the colorful paperback RIF books has lent an obvious gaiety to the spaces that were heretofore drab and uninviting. Fresh paint, new window decoration, pillows, paintings, etc., are a sampling of the additions which have made these reading areas more pleasant places to be in. Questionnaires are now being prepared to evaluate the benefits of developing this type of space. Specific questionnaires will be sent to parents of school children, to the children directly, to teachers, principals, and to the staffs of the various involved agencies.

The Western Addition is a community possessing many free health care centers, clinics, tot centers, etc., to which children come and wait for needed services. We have begun to seed these waiting rooms with RIF books with the cooperation of their staffs.

We have been advised of and have observed the fact that the books we have made available have helped to make the waiting time more pleasant, and the books are disappearing rapidly and will require frequent replacing.

Many of the community agencies and some of the schools find the program so appealing that they are preparing proposals of their own so that the RIF program can continue on an individual agency basis when Phase II has been completed. The director is assisting in writing these proposals and Friends of the Library have expressed an interest in assisting these agencies in obtaining private funding. The following agencies are now developing proposals: (see examples attached)

The Western Addition YWCA
Crittenton Homes
Fillmore & Fell Corporation Group Home
Guidance Service Centers
Guided Group Interaction Center
Public Health Care Center #2
Mt. Zion Teenage Clinic
The Tooth Trip
The San Francisco African American Historical and Cultural Society, Inc.
Booker T. Washington Center
McAteer High School
Woodrow Wilson Reading Lab

READING IS FUN-DAMENTAL
PHASE II
January 15, 1973

Mr. Henderson of the Golden Gate Magazine Company has expressed a committment to allow individual agencies to receive a 30% discount on all books purchased from his company.

The attached list of schools and agencies have received book distributions from RIF.

Other interesting things that are happening to us:

The Regional Director of RIF, Mrs. Barbara Ronan, located at 3301 East Cypress, Phoenix, Arizona, 85008 (Telephone: 602-267-0403), has called to advise that she will be visiting our area soon. She has also sent information on good things that are happening in other areas of her region.

James Daniels from Readers Digest is preparing a story on RIF. He will be visiting San Francisco on January 20, 1973, to obtain our story.

Many of the participants of the Reading Fair have made their special services and talents available to participating schools and agencies. Author Ernest Gaines has made three school appearances since the Fair. He goes into classrooms and reads to children.

The children of St. Dominic's school are writing their own special experiences about the library and will make a film on the best three.

The Black Students Union is meeting with Darrell Sevilla from the University of California Audio-Visual Science Center developing their own story and film on the public library. They would like to show their film to the elementary schools of the district. They raised their own funds for the cost of the film.

Mr. Joe Sugg at the Western Addition Library has advised Mrs. Reid that many children have come into the library and have mentioned receiving RIF books and suggestions that they obtain library cards.

The tape prepared by Mrs. Jane Manthorne, Coordinator of Young Adult Services for the Boston Public Library, has been duplicated and is now ready for distribution to the many participants and guests at the Book Fair who have made a request for a copy.

In summary, the second phase of the RIF program has been successful in that children in the Western Addition of San Francisco have received books of their own which have proven indeed fun to read. Many have had the experience of going directly to the Golden Gate Warehouse to make selections from their vast assortment of paperback books. "Reading Is Fun-Damental" spaces and rooms have been developed throughout the community. Various agencies have cooperated to enrich their programs which center on reading. Children who were not accustomed to going to the public library are now going and obtaining library cards.

READING IS FUN-DAMENTAL
PHASE II
January 15, 1973

Evaluation research has been designed and will be conducted in the final two months of the program. Individual agencies are preparing proposals to obtain funding so that they can continue the programs that were started under RIF. Some of the members of the Friends of the Library are acting as volunteers in the schools but the community agencies are using their own staffs and agency volunteers to distribute books and work with their own children in reading programs. It is hoped that with the termination of the RIF Phase II program in the Western Addition that Friends of the Library and other funding agencies will give every consideration to funding programs that will not require staffing or building costs but will cover the costs of continued provision of books to children.

MRS. CARETH B. REID
PROGRAM DIRECTOR

sgh

Detailed book inventories for each of the participating agencies are available on request from the Friends' office (558-3770)

April 4, 1972

READING IS FUN-DAMENTAL STATISTICS

DISTRIBUTIONS	Jan 10-17 1st	Jan 31-Feb 4 2nd	Feb 28-Mar 4 3rd	Apr 15-22 4th
Children participating	2273	3620	3476	4667
Agencies and Centers	7	14	15	16
Schools	6	6	6	7
Nursery Schools	2	3	3	3
Housing Projects	3	5	5	6
Volunteers	40	45	60	46
BOOK ORDERING				
Number of Publishers	14	14	5	7
12,838 Number of Books	4648	4819	3281	6111
Number of titles	435	435	48	83
$ 6949.23 $ Amount	$2621.28	2476.61	1707. 92	$3135.42